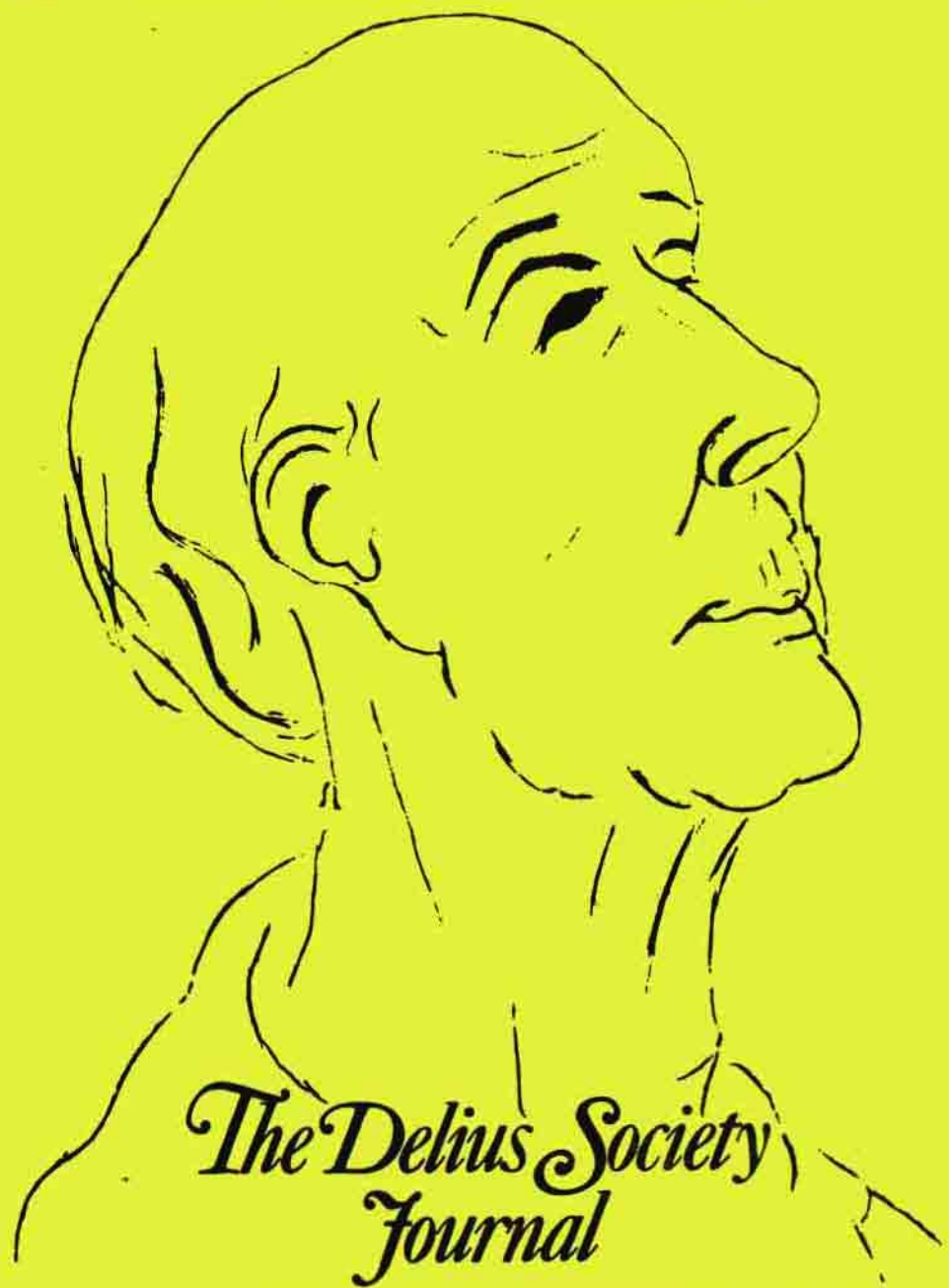


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January 1980, Number 66

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**The Delius Society**

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*The Delius Society*  
*Journal*

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## *Cover Illustration*

**F Delius by Dawn Redwood (after Kapp)**

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## EDITORIAL

Members will have been saddened to learn that our Vice-President, Sir Charles Groves, is being forced to resign from his post as Musical Director of the English National Opera owing to strain and ill-health. I have written to him expressing our regrets and wishing him a rapid recovery. It is, however, pleasing to see that the performances of *The Turn of the Screw* which Sir Charles was to have conducted have been assigned to another Delius Society member, Lionel Friend.

\* \* \* \*

In December the recording of the complete incidental music to *Hassan* by the Bournemouth Sinfonietta under Vernon Handley was released from EMI at £5.40 (although it can be obtained more cheaply from discount record shops). On 5th December it was reviewed on the BBC4 radio programme, *Kaleidoscope*, and the broadcast included an interview with Dawn Redwood who contributed the sleeve-notes to the recording. Michael Kennedy was enthusiastic about the new recording, describing the music as "the essence of Delius" and the final scene as "among the greatest pages in the whole of Delius's output", a sentiment which perhaps many of us will feel was pitching it a little too strongly. The item was later repeated on *Encore*.

\* \* \* \*

Previously the second box of Beecham-Delius transfers from 78 rpm was available at £19.50, although here again considerable savings (up to £5) may be made by purchasing at such shops as those in Dean Street and Rathbone Place (both off Oxford Street, London). The recording of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* was broadcast on 29th November—unfortunately a Thursday afternoon when not many members would have been able to hear it. On 17th November it was referred to in BBC4's *Record Review* by Robert Philip, who had this to say: "This is the work which includes the well-known *Walk to the Paradise Garden*, and the whole opera is drenched with that same nostalgia and melancholy. I'm afraid that it does sound rather like a period-piece now, uncomfortably so for me. Delius's own libretto is the main problem, full of 'twixts', 'thithers' and 'evermores', like early translations of Wagner, and the quaintness of the text isn't helped for modern listeners by the slightly old-fashioned 'refeened' pronunciation of the principal two singers, Loreley Dyer and Rene Soames. However, the orchestral playing is glorious, and that's what really counts in this post-Wagnerian work."

Listeners who were disappointed at Mr. Philip's unoriginal style of disparagement will have been recompensed by a much more distinguished musician, Anthony Hopkins, devoting two of his weekly *Talking About Music* programmes to the same opera, on November 15th and 22nd.

\* \* \* \*

Other Delius music broadcast in an autumn in which the BBC did the composer proud included a repeat of Dr. Fenby's concert with the BBC Concert Orchestra and a performance of the Double Concerto on

*Your Midweek Choice* at the request of Mr. Gordon Lovgreen of Liverpool, his third Delius choice to be played in 1979. Congratulations, Mr. Lovgreen—but are you the only member who writes to these programmes? On 10th November (repeated on 13th) our member Christopher Palmer contributed a talk on *Brigg Fair* in the series *The Magic Of Music*. It is always heartening to hear Delius's music being performed by young artists, and on 31st October the Second Violin Sonata was broadcast by Carla Rodrigues, aged 16, accompanied by Mary Wu, who is 14. Miss Anne Pinder, who heard the broadcast, tells me that it was a very good performance.

\* \* \* \*

I am indebted to our member John Michael East for drawing my attention—after the event, unfortunately—to a performance of the Delius String Quartet which was given by the Medici Quartet at a Park Lane Group concert of British string quartets at London's Purcell Room on 15th November 1979. Other works were by Rawsthorne, Maconchy and Barry Guy, and John described the Delius as 'a most sensitive and beautiful performance which had everything the Fidelio recording somehow lacks'. He did not notice any other Delius Society members there, which is regrettable in the light of the small number of public airings this work gets, but I must confess to not being aware of the concert and therefore not being able to advertise it in the *Journal*. May I once more appeal to members to keep the Editor informed of forthcoming performances?

\* \* \* \*

The December 1979 issue of *The Musical Times* contained an article entitled *The Delius Birthplace* by our member Philip Jones, who is a member of the music staff at Keele University. Philip has done much painstaking research and come up with results which will surprise many people. The Editor of *The Musical Times* has very kindly given permission to reprint the piece in *The Delius Society Journal*, and this we hope to do at an early date.

\* \* \* \*

Last autumn the publishers Gollancz brought out a volume entitled *The English Musical Renaissance* by Peter J. Pirie. No prizes for originality of title—there are at least two other books with virtually identical names—but Mr. Pirie is well-known for his strong views on British composers. I have not yet read the work, but I understand that Delius and Elgar are the central figures, with Bax, Bridge, Britten, Ireland, Tippett, Vaughan Williams, Walton and Warlock also featuring prominently. The price is £8.50.

\* \* \* \*

Congratulations to our member Roy Price on getting a large column in the *Western Mail* on 3rd July 1979 seeking information concerning the first performance of *An Arabesque* which took place in Newport, Gwent, in 1920, and also inviting members to join his proposed Welsh branch of the Delius Society. We wish him well in both these ventures.

\* \* \* \*

The Hon. Treasurer has asked me to point out that a number of members still have not paid their subscriptions for 1979-80, and there is also a number who pay by Banker's Order which has not been altered from £3 to £5. It would save much work and postal costs if members would check their accounts to see whether they are, in fact, still members. As both printing and postal costs are still rising, extra copies of the *Journal* will cost 70p (including postage) from this issue onwards. Back numbers cost 40p up to no. 46 and 50p from no. 50 onwards. Nos. 43, 47, 48 and 49 are no longer available.

\* \* \* \*

It was interesting that several members should comment on the absence of an Editorial in *Journal* no. 65, which seems to prove that at least some people read it! The reason was quite simply that due to a miscalculation the printer was sent too much copy and several items had to be held over at a late stage. One of our regular contributors, Stephen Lloyd, has kindly agreed to assist me by editing the April issue of the *Journal*, and contributions should be sent to him at 41 Marlborough Road, Luton, Beds. Material for the July issue should be sent to Christopher Redwood as usual.

## 1980 Annual General Meeting

A brief announcement squeezed into the last *Journal* indicated that your committee was considering holding the 1980 AGM in Manchester on 21st June in order to coincide with a performance of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* that evening. This suggestion was made for a number of reasons: first, to emphasise that the Delius Society is not only London-based. Secondly, it is assumed that many members will want to see the opera and will be prepared to travel in order to do so, and we usually try to link the AGM to other Delius performances. Thirdly, there is a very real prospect of a North-West branch of the Society being formed and this arrangement would help to get it off the ground. At the same time we wish to make it clear that this is not intended to be a Delius Society weekend; that is being planned for a later date in Bradford. The present plan envisages members travelling to Manchester on the Saturday morning and meeting for an informal lunch. The AGM will take place in the afternoon and the opera will replace the usual dinner in the evening. Overnight accommodation will be booked for those who cannot reach their homes that night. The Editor would like to hear from any member intending to travel to Manchester by car and who has spare seats which they would be willing to put at the disposal of other members. Alternatively, I would like to know if there is sufficient support to lay on a coach from the London area, or make a party booking by train. British Rail has quoted £12.00 per person for a party of ten or more, which compares very favourably with the normal weekend return fare of £19.20.

Naturally, such an experiment depends for its success on the support of the members, and it is to be hoped that those in the London area

will not feel deprived of an event which they may have come to look on as their own. A number of members have already indicated their intention of coming; it is important that the Editor should know of any others as it may be necessary to post full details if these are not ready when the next *Journal* goes to press. A block booking will be made for the opera (not confined to those attending the AGM).

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## Some notes on the Flecker/Delius "Hassan" in Perth, W.A. 1975

by Rachel Lowe-Dugmore

The performance of Flecker's *Hassan* with Delius's music at the Octagon Theatre, University of Western Australia, Perth, W.A. in July 1975, was not the first performance of the play in Australia, for Sydney University had staged a performance with modern incidental music some years before, but it was the first attempt in Australia to realise the Flecker/Delius combination on stage. A joint venture by the Department of English and Department of Music as part of the new desire to explore the arts of that transitional and eclectic period, 1880-1920, (for so long dismissed as insignificant), it was given financial support from the Wardle Music Fund, the Delius Trust and the performing Arts Committee of the University. Considerable co-operation came from other University bodies such as the Music Society and the Choral Society, while the Swan Players provided the nucleus of the cast directed by Professor Max Jones of the English Department. Graham Wood of the Music Department conducted an orchestra of students and young professionals and Jean Callaghan was Chorus Mistress. The present writer acted as co-ordinator and production assistant.

Taking our cue from Basil Dean's comments on the Rose Bruford production at the Scala Theatre, London, that a modern realisation with Delius's music should concentrate on words, movement and symbolism, the Director decided to use the apron stage of the beautiful Octagon Theatre rather than ask its proscenium stage facilities to be built and so disturb its daily use as a lecture theatre. An orchestra pit is available for use with the apron stage, but the orchestra of 28 players would have come too much between the actors and the audience, making difficult also the use of the auditorium for exits and entrances. There remained one alternative, to the dismay of the conductor, to put the musicians behind a white gauze curtain at the back, thus using the whole inner stage and posing other problems, but none of them insuperable. The result of this move was magical; for, with the skilful lighting of Steve Jodrell and John Doyle, the orchestra became the story tellers who faded into the background as the actors emerged from the shadows, only the gold of the harp continuing to gleam.

A single set of a small pavilion, taken from a Persian miniature, and designed by Tom Gibbons of the English Department and David Jones of the Octagon Theatre staff, was rudely referred to by adherents of the



kitchen sink school of drama as 'the Nedlands Clochemerle'; but it was, in fact, our highly versatile inner stage and an economic necessity, since we did not have Dean's budget and had decided to put the bulk of the allocated money for staging into costumes and lighting. This was wise, for the series of tableaux with which the movement was punctuated, (again like Persian miniatures), were extremely beautiful, due to the jewel-like colours of the costumes superbly executed by Fay Coyle under the direction of Professor Jones and Dr. Gibbons.

The problem with *Hassan* will, however, always be twofold:— firstly that of length and secondly that of balance. Flecker, as we know from Dawn Redwood's monograph, tightened up the first part but barely touched the second part, which now moves too slowly whatever one does with it. Yet it defies pruning, because to cut the speeches of Rafi and Pervaneh, or to omit the ghost scene, is to rob the play of Flecker's metaphysics,—the very soul of the drama's poetry and motivation. The Director, therefore, pruned away unnecessary characters in the Divan Scene and chose the 1920 ballets without the Divertissement. The choice of 9A and 15 from 1920 on the table of numbers I have supplied with this article, was dictated by their dramatic aptness as much as by their brevity, but the sad decision to omit two orchestral interludes in the second half was due partly to lack of orchestral rehearsal time and also because of the length of the play. To add music which is purely entr'acte between scenes requiring no scene change on our stage, seemed to be an unnecessary luxury, but the audience felt there was a long musical gap before the Closing Scene.

Some scenes benefitted from judicious pruning in the long run, as, for instance, that very weak spot, the scenes in the vaults and the cell in Act 3, which still betrays the changes of direction to which the play was subjected by Flecker. Here, because of the lack of scenery, some elision could take place unnoticed.

In addition, the Procession of Protracted Death was made as short as possible, and conducted in shadows and flashes of light, using suggestion

Yasmin (comes up to HASSAN.) The slaves silently disappear.  
Hassan (drawing her towards him with infinite tenderness) „Yasmin!“  
Yasmin (geht auf Hassan zu) Die Sklaven verschwinden schweigend.  
Hassan (lacht ihr an und Mit unendlicher Zärtlichkeit) „Yasmin!“  
Very quietly. *Sehr ruhig.*



Dark Woman (speaking) Leave go my ankle, son of dirt!  
 Die Dunkle (spricht) Laß los den Fuß, du Sohn von Kot.

Chief Beggar (catching her) Lady, if the dirt should gleam, Things that happen here would seem.

Führer der Bettler (faßt sie) O Herrin, wenn den Kot ich glänzen ließ, geschäht es hier, erschiene dir noch dies.

Chief Beggar.

Führer der Bettler.

Rafi (raises his hand.)

Alle stand at attention.)

Rafi (hebt die Hand.)

Alle stehen voll Erwartung.)

A Paradox in Pa-radise!  
 Als Paradox im Paradies.

Chorus of Beggars.  
 Chor der Bettler.

Pa-ra-dox in Pa-ra-dise!  
 Pa-ra-dox im Pa-ra-dies.

The musical score consists of a vocal line (bass clef) and a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line has lyrics in English and German. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

GONG *ff* The Chief Beggar rises to his feet. His rags drop off and he shines in gold.  
 Der Führer der Bettler richtet sich hoch auf, wirft die Lumpen ab, und steht plötzlich goldglänzend da.

U. E. 6966.

rather than realism. This was in keeping with the portrayal of the Caliph as an exquisitely subtle artist of life and death rather than a raging tyrant, and of Masrur as his darker self, quietly menacing.

The ghost scene, feared by some of us as a possible cause of discomfort to a modern audience, proved to be a highlight and completely compelling. Rafi and Pervaneh mimed their ghostly selves and the Ghost of the Fountain never appeared on stage, but his voice, like theirs, was recorded with suitable effects. Max Jones's tremendous range of tones, superbly modulated, as the voice of the ghost, chilled us to the bone and prepared the way for the acceptance of the Golden Journey as the logical outcome of the play, showing us that this scene was, in fact, one of Flecker's masterstrokes.

Max Jones's own masterstroke was, however, a last-minute decision to make Ishak a *young* poet instead of the elderly seer that one is led to believe he must be. Ishak was our most experienced actor and able to effect the transition easily; but, to everyone's astonishment, much of the problem of character motivation, inherent in the character of Hassan himself, vanished by this switch. One felt that both Ishak and Hassan were Flecker, and new insight came to everyone.

Since the music is so completely integral to the play, it is obviously better if all of it is played, but Flecker himself, we learn from Dawn Redwood's book, was prepared for the ballets to be cut. Even so, and if the play were shorn of everything that panders to the cult of the oriental rather than the truly oriental, we would still be with a long play. If we could be sure that is what Flecker wanted, then the only thing is to start the entertainment at 6.30 and a long Wagnerian-type evening! But are we sure we have what Flecker wanted?

Perhaps the time has come for Flecker scholars to prepare a variorum text from which a new acting edition could be evolved.

As regards supplying musical cues in the text or stage directions

in the full score, there are points for and against. We, in Perth, had a cue sheet based on suggestions culled from Dean's own production book at Boosey and Hawkes' library, but we soon altered the list to suit our Director's demands. No two productions can be the same, but some guidelines such as those in the Heinemann acting edition supplied by Dean himself are undoubtedly helpful if they do not lead to stereotyped productions.

Readers of Robert Threlfall's recent article about the long-awaited published full-score of *Hassan* now with us at last may have gained the impression that in Perth we used the 1920 score entirely. It will be evident from the attached table that the 1920 score was used as a point of departure and added from the 1923 version as necessary.

To work on a show of this kind is a wonderful experience and a good bridge between the world of the Musical and that of Opera. Everyone takes away his own special moments from such an amalgam of poetry and music, humour and pathos, compassion and cruelty, as Flecker gives us with Delius's help; but my own most exciting moment, apart from when Graham Wood raised his baton on the opening night and the music began, was that moment in rehearsal with the actors when Max Jones recited the Serenade and explained just how skilful Delius was to counterpoint a simple iambic tune to Flecker's classically organised verse metre, and how perfectly they fit if the speaker takes the right pace, to from the right emotional balance of from and content.

Yes! The Serenade should never be performed without the spoken words and Flecker's words should never be performed without Delius. There should be more Flecker/Delius. There should be more poetic dramas with incidental music, but the music always be as good as this!

THE MUSIC OF THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN PERFORMANCE OF *HASSAN* (Delius) correlated with the published vocal scores, the the MS full score and the 1922 text.

The text used was that of the Basil Dean performing edition of the 1922 book, published in 1951 in 3 Acts, whereas the original Heinemann edition of 1922 was in 5 Acts as was the music.)

To make tabulation easier the Vocal Score of 1920, UE 6966 will be called 'O' (original) and Vocal Score of 1923, BH18680, will be called 'R' (revised).

Where a musical number is found in both the 'O' and 'R' scores but there is difference between the versions, the one used at Perth, W.A. is indicated in round brackets after the entry 'O' & 'R'. Otherwise it can be assumed that there is no difference between the two versions.

Vocal Scores	Full Score: item number and title arranged in three acts as performed at Perth. (The numbers are essentially those for production and will not correspond with the new published score.)	1922 text in 5 Acts as in the scores
O = 1920		
R = 1923		
O & R	1 Introduction to Act 1	Act 1, Scs. 1 & 2.
R only	2 Interlude between Scs. 1 & 2	
O & R	2A Scene 2. Moonlight. The Street of Felicity	

O & R (R orch)	3	Hassan's Serenade to Yasmin (1923 orchestration with violin solo preferred to voice and pf. of 1920)	
O & R	4	"Hassan falls under the shadow of the Fountain. The first light of dawn"	
O & R (R order)	5	Unaccompanied chorus from within the House of the Moving Walls. (In "O" this is found after number 7 below. "R" order as here was preferred)	
O & R	6	Prelude to Scene 3	Act 2, Sc. 1.
O & R	7	Fanfare	
O & R (O)	8	Ballet and chorus of the Beggars (1920 shorter version)	
O & R (O)	9	Ballet and chorus of the Dancing Girls (1920 shorter version)	
O only	9A	"Paradox in Paradise"	
O & R	—	(10. "Divertissement" omitted)	
R only	—	(10A. General Dance omitted)	
R only	11	Unaccompanied chorus of Beggars and Dancing Girls off stage	
O & R	12	Prelude to Scene 4. The Street of Felicity	Act 2, Sc. 2.
R only	13	Ishak's Poem: "Thy dawn, O Master of the World, thy dawn . . ."	
This per- formance only	13A	Curtain music: Hassan's Serenade with viola solo	
O & R	14	Prelude to Act 2. Women's chorus: accompanied	Act 3, Sc. 1.
O only	15	Curtain music: the short Serenade from the 1920 score	
R only	—	(15A. A repeat of the full Serenade for orchestra omitted)	
O & R (O)	16	Introduction to Scene 2. The Great Hall of the Palace (1920 shorter version)	Act 3, Sc. 2.
O & R	—	(16A. The fanfare for Distinguished Visitors omitted)	
O & R	17	The Entry of the Caliph	
R only	17A	Fanfares	
	17B	Fanfares	
O & R	18	Prelude to Act 3	Act 4, Scs. 1 & 2.
R only	—	(19. Interlude between scenes 1 & 2 omitted)	Palace Vaults & A Cell
O & R	20	Prelude to Scene 3. The Palace Gardens "towards sunset of the next day"	Act 5, Sc. 1.
O & R	21	The Song of the Muezzin	
O & R	22	The Procession of Protracted Death	Sc. 2.
O & R	—	(23. Prelude to the last scene was omitted: "The Ghost of the Artist of the Fountain rises from the Fountain itself . . .")	
O & R (R)	24	FINAL SCENE. At the Gate of the Moon and the Golden Road. Solo, chorus and orchestra in the extended version of 1923;—because the mixed chorus was more suitable for our choral resources and the extra length provided for Basil Dean's production proved exactly timed as a melos behind the words of the spoken poem.	Sc. 3.



(above) Dinner at Felmingham Hall. On the nearest table, from left to right, are Mr. Ray Martin, Mrs. and Mr. Reg Serpell, Mrs Christine Burgess and Mrs. Carol Lyons.

(below) Delius Society meeting at Burgh-next-Aylsham. From left to right: Miss Jane Rolph, Mr. Mike Marshall, Mr. Peter Lyons, Mr. Rodney Meadows, Mrs. Gilbert Parfitt, Mr. Philip Jones, Mr. Michael Green, Mr. P. Somerset Fry, Mr. Frank Wilson, Miss Patricia Kirke and Mr. Ray Martin.





## NORWICH F

*(above)* Treasurer Mr. Peter Lyons enjoys a drink with Mr. Arthur Ridgewell.

*(right)* Norman Del Mar and John Amis talking to members in the Festival Club bar. Also facing the camera are Mr. Michael Green and Mr. Gilbert Parfitt.



# FESTIVAL 1979



(above) Mr. Paul Marchant, Mr. Ned Burgess, Mrs. Carol Lyons, Mrs. Christine Burgess and Mr. Roy Price.

(below) The scene in the Festival Club as members listen to Norman Del Mar. From left to right: Mrs. and Mr. Layton Ring, Mr. Arthur Ridgewell, a visitor, Mr. Dick Kitching and Mr. Peter Lyons.



## INFORMATION





*"Ella Grainger with her husband on their wedding day"*



# Obituary: Ella Grainger Manville

by John Bird

Ella Grainger Manville, the artist and poet, widow of Percy Grainger, died on Tuesday 17th July 1979 at her home in White Plains in the State of New York. She was 90.

Mrs. Manville was born in Stockholm, Sweden on 1st May 1889, daughter of Matilda Amalia (Anderson) and Gören Oscar Frederick Brandelius. Following studies in Stockholm for two years at the Björstedska Handels-Institutet and one year's employment in a Stockholm manufacturing company, she moved to London in 1906 on a Bernard Shaw foreign student exchange scholarship where she studied art for three years at the Slade School of London University. During this period she also attended classes in Paris at the Grand Chaumier and at André l'Hôte's atelier for painting. She also took up employment as a foreign language correspondent with a firm in pre-war Berlin in order to perfect her German.

She remained in London throughout the First World War and for the immediate post-war years during which time she continued drawing and painting mainly portraits. She herself was sketched by Augustus John on several occasions. Her paintings and ceramic work have been exhibited twice in London and later on a number of occasions in the United States. Her two books of poetry with illustrations are *Pavement Artist* (Hutchinson, London, 1939) and *The Wayward Girl* (privately printed, U.S.A., 1941).

Subsequent work with the Swedish diplomatic service took her to Japan and later Australia. She met her future husband, the composer and pianist Percy Aldridge Grainger, in 1926 on a ship bound from Australia to the United States. They were married on 9th August 1928 on the stage of Hollywood Bowl during a concert which featured the first performance of Grainger's *To A Nordic Princess*, a work inspired by and dedicated to his bride.

They resided at the Grainger home, 7 Cromwell Place in White Plains, and maintained a summer home at Pevensey Bay on the Sussex Coast. This was with the exception of the period 1940-43, when they took up temporary residence in Springfield, Missouri, a more central location from the standpoint of Percy's heavy wartime touring schedule. Ella travelled with her husband on most of his concert tours throughout America and the rest of the world often joining in his music-making after she had taught herself to play percussion bells, tuned glasses and other unusual instruments which are needed in some of his compositions. During their trips to Australia they helped in the construction of the Grainger Museum on the grounds of Melbourne University. Following her husband's death in 1961 she devoted much of her time and energies to the establishment and maintenance of the Percy Grainger

Library Society. She also made a number of trips to Europe, Soviet Russia and the Grainger Museum in Australia.

On 19th January 1972 she married Stewart Manville who had worked with her for ten years as the archivist of the Grainger musical legacy. She is survived by relatives in Sweden, Finland, England and Japan.

She made several visits with her husband to Frederick and Jelka Delius at Grez-sur-Loing and a body of correspondence from this friendship survives in both the Delius and Grainger archives.

She is remembered by the present writer as a woman of great strength, charm and generosity. The quality of which her husband wrote in 1928, 'half boyish, yet wholly womanly' was still evident well into her years of declining health—to the great endearment of all who knew her.

## 1979 Norwich Festival

Thirty-two is a pretty good turnout for a Delius Society meeting at Holborn these days—except when Eric Fenby is the speaker—but it is doubtful whether many could have imagined that number crowding into the small schoolroom in the tiny village of Burgh-next-Aylsham on the evening of Saturday, 13th October, 1979. The entertainment was provided by the leading lights of our Midlands Branch: first Lyndon Jenkins made us listen to Delius really critically in one of his fascinating lectures with portions of the score projected onto the screen. Then Dick Kitching presented a delightful film sequence to the music of Delius. Afterwards we repaired to the nearby home of Mr. and Mrs. P. Somerset Fry who entertained us to a superb reception, thus setting the seal on a splendid evening which had begun with what the Chairman described as "the best meal I have ever eaten before a Delius Society meeting", at the popular Felmingham Hall.

The day had begun with a visit to the Festival Theatre Club at noon where Greene King's Abbott Ale had been laid on specially for us. Here Norman Del Mar and John Amis talked to us informally and then joined us in drinks and lunch. "Tell me," asked Norman, "do the members of the Delius Society like absolutely everything that the composer wrote?"—a question that brought forth a far-from-unanimous response. After lunch we moved to the rather gaunt setting of the University of East Anglia where the Munch exhibition was being held. Personally I have to confess to being both disappointed and depressed by this part of the Festival; the virtual absence of any colour work by the artist (and also of the Delius lithographs—surely a serious omission at a Festival partly built around this composer?) gave a one-sided and gloomy view of Munch very much in contrast to the Hayward Gallery exhibition of

a few years ago. The atmosphere seemed to have affected the staff, too; I am still trying to work out the logic of the unsmiling Irish porter's answer to my enquiry: "Yes, sir, there are toilets on every floor of the library. Just go down two flights of stairs". The Diaghilev exhibition was held in the Sainsbury Arts Centre, which resembles nothing so much as a redundant aircraft hangar (and the tea did not live up to the name of the benefactor, either). On the way we passed the concrete jungle of student halls of residence, most of the curtains in which seemed to be drawn. One assumes that either the students rise very late on Saturdays, or that they spend their weekends doing things that are best unobserved.

Three hotels in all were patronised for the best-attended Delius Society weekend to date. Felmingham Hall took its full quota of twenty-three residents and had been completely booked by the end of May. Late-comers had to spread themselves through two other hotels in the North Walsham area to find accommodation. Perhaps the most important by-product of the weekend was the recruitment of two keen local Delians, Miss Jane Rolph and Mr. Mike Marshall, who are determined to form a branch of the Delius Society in the area. Thanks to their efforts several paragraphs were devoted to the project in the *Eastern Daily Press* on 29th November, and anyone interested is invited to write to Miss Rolph, c/o 4 Nightingale Close, Mulbarton, Norwich. Other prospective new members resulting from the Norwich weekend include John Amis, and Professor Wilfred Mellers and Dr. John Paynter of York University. It would be no exaggeration to state that the Delius Society made a deep impression on Norwich, so much so that the Festival organisers have made sure that at least one major Delius work is included in their next season's concerts. This will be a performance of the Delius 'Cello Concerto played by our member Julian Lloyd Webber with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Gennadi Rozdestvensky on Saturday, 12th April 1980. While it is not likely that a weekend would be organised on the strength of one concert, it is nevertheless to be hoped that as many members as can will support the event. Please let the Editor know if you have spare seats in your car, or whether you would wish to go by coach, assuming that there are enough people interested. There seems very little doubt, however, that a further Delius Society weekend will be held before long: an autumn trip to Bradford is already being planned.

And what of the main event of the Festival, so far as we were concerned, the performance of *A Mass of Life*, being given fifty years to the day after the first concert of the 1929 Festival and dedicated to its conductor's memory? Sadly, it is necessary to begin by reproducing one of those senseless and meaningless pieces of criticism that one hoped had died out in the 1950s. It appeared in that widely-read paper, *The Daily Telegraph*, under the name of Alan Blyth:

HAVING listened at the weekend to the performance of Delius's "A Mass of Life" that opened the 45th Norwich Triennial Festival, I think I have some inkling of how the Duke of Clarence must have felt when he drowned in a butt of malmsey.

Nietzsche's pretentious, overblown poetry is sweetened to even greater lusciousness by Delius's diffuse, post-Romantic music, which is here rather like Mahler gone to seed, if such a thing can be imagined.

Norman Del Mar, who has become the festival's Artistic Director, dedicated the performance to the memory of that great Delian Sir Thomas Beecham. Del Mar has had the admirable idea for the festival of comparing and contrasting the work of three near-contemporaries, Mahler, Richard Strauss and Delius, all composers much after his own heart, but even his strong advocacy and that of the Festival Chorus and Philharmonia Orchestra could not rescue Delius's meandering score from far outstaying its welcome.

Nietzsche's ideology of free-will and his dismissal of established social and religious values, which caused him to be reviled in a more moral age than our own, found a sympathetic response from the composer. He certainly gives us his promised "outburst of the soul," but the sense of lodging and poignancy that permeates the piece degenerates too often into a droopy self-indulgence as it wends its way over almost two hours' length with insufficient variety in timing and orchestration.

Not until the final pages is the torpor dispersed by a flood of more defined, truly passionate sound, but by then it is too late to save the work from its own over-ripe textures and lack of discipline.

The role of Zarathustra really calls for an heroic baritone. Thomas Hemsley does not quite possess that, but his innate musicality and feeling for words enabled him to make much of his long, taxing part.

Of the other soloists, John Mitchinson, the tenor, again showed the benefits in lyrical delivery accruing from his work with Goodall on "Tristan." The women's solos need more soaring tone than was to be heard on this occasion.

Let me make it quite clear that I am not carping about this piece of criticism simply because it says unflattering things about a work which I admire greatly. My point is that Mr. Blyth was presumably there to judge the performance rather than the work itself, and this his account proves him singularly ill-equipped to do by its early revelation of his lack of sympathy with it. He then proceeds to fill his over-paid quota of column-inches with further invective in the hope of proving that his opinion is right. If this article conveys any message at all to the reader it is simply "I wish that my Editor had not sent me to listen to this music", a sentiment with which every Delius Society member will be in enthusiastic agreement.

Fortunately it would seem that not all of the critics went to the same performance, and to see the other side of the coin I reproduce below the account written by Wilfred Mellers in *The Financial Times*:

"Mass of Life fills Albert Hall," yelled a newspaper headline back in the palmy days of Beecham. It filled the (less capacious) St. Andrew's Hall for the Norwich Festival's opening concert, which was dedicated, in his centenary year, to Beecham's memory. The conductor was the Festival's artistic director, Norman del Mar, whose performance with the Festival Chorus, the Philharmonia Orchestra, and a distinguished quarter of soloists, was, if hardly comparable with vintage Beecham, impressive enough to reveal afresh the calibre of this slightly flawed masterpiece.

That we should hear it every so often is important, if only because it counteracts the cliché-image of Delius old, blind and paralysed in his summer garden at Grez. True, he was as an aftermath of Wagner a composer of the twilight of European will and consciousness: nonetheless his elegiac apprehension of mortality is so poignant precisely because his capacity to live, here and now, is so intense; only a man vibrant in every vein and sinew could be so agonisingly yet renewingly aware of the senses' inevitable cessation.

The superb chorus that opens Delius's Nietzschean affirmation remains literally breathtaking, demonstrating how live, rather than dead, on the mark Delius was in saying of musical technique that "The sense of flow is all that matters." It is in relation to this Dionysiac zest that we must respond to the heart-rending valediction that concludes Part One, and to the trance and trance-inducing arabesques of Part Two's noontide idyll.

In the great finale we realise that the positive and negative poles of the Delian experience are inseparable, for it's from the penultimate invocation of midnight that the music surges

into the vision of the joy of creation itself. The Nietzschean assertion of will finds paradoxical fulfilment in the admission that eternal joy overrides the individual ego. Significantly, the final orgasmic ecstasy is still sublimer than the initial paean to the life force.

The vindication of this performance was that this consummation (the sexual implications of the metaphor are pertinent) really happened, transporting us out of this world. In the first half the critical sense had been more active. Del Mar didn't, as Beecham used to, carry us blithely on the elastically springing pulse through Delius's weaker moments—such as those atypically girlish la-las which suggest that Delius, who could magnificently scale heights and plumb depths, found simply human happiness both elusive and illusory.

In the first half, too, the chorus, especially the men, had seemed deficient in resonance and in continuity of line, unable to compete with the orchestral forces: which were themselves prone to rhythmic laxity and to patches of sour tone; while Thomas Hemsley, for many years associated with the arduous role of Zarathustra, was also somewhat ill at ease.

In the second half, however, the composer, abetted by the conductor, triumphed. Hemsley grew into the stability and warmth we expect of him; the orchestra played magisterially (the woodwind melismata in the noon movement were ravishing); and in the finale the chorus almost matched the three soloists — Jacqueline Delman, the subtly responsive Norman Proctor and John Mitchinson, heroic-toned and securely on the note as ever — in radiance and bloom. The ultimate corybantic bliss, carrying all before it, made a glorious initiation to a festival.

Finally, lucky members in the Home Counties can look forward to two more performances of the *Mass* this spring, one of them the first hearing of Dr. Fenby's reduced orchestration. See *Forthcoming Events* for details.

Christopher Redwood.

## Un Embarras de Del Mars!

by Derek Cox.

A week-end which starts with a fine performance of *A Mass of Life* in Norwich conducted by Norman Del Mar and ends with a creditable performance of the Double Concerto in Sussex conducted by Jonathan Del Mar is obviously something special, even unique. The Norwich week-end is reviewed elsewhere in this Journal; here is a short note on the Sussex performance of the Double Concerto.

Philip Heseltine wrote of this work — "To write a double concerto at all is something of a tour de force. It is not the kind of work that comes to one and clamours to be written." (One is reminded of Dr. Johnson's dictum on women preaching — "One is surprised to find it done at all"! ) It is likely that, but for Delius's friendship with the Harrison sisters, May and Beatrice, who gave its first performance in 1920 at Queen's Hall, the work would not have been written.

It is a rarely performed work and its performance in the Theatre at Hurstpierpoint College on October 14th was a Delius début both for the Mid-Sussex Sinfonia and its conductor, Jonathan Del Mar. The two soloists were Maria Lidka (violin) and Marius May ('cello), mother and son.

Overall, the work may not be a great success as a concerto, but it has beautiful passages for both violin and 'cello which are very satisfying and these the soloists achieved with good clean lines, especially the long-drawn melody played by solo 'cello which begins the slow middle section. Throughout, they brought out some delicate Delian nuances, particularly on the violin, Delius's own instrument. Elsewhere, the 'cello had more of a struggle to deal with the rather cumbersome writing, where the 'cellist sometimes goes about his business in a rather pedestrian and unimaginative way, reflecting, as Beecham commented, the difficulties Delius seems to have had in handling the 'cello part when it is not playing melodic passages. There was, however, a tender rapport between the two instruments in the opening subject and again in the interweaving dialogue of the slow middle section.

Having heard Lyndon Jenkins's fascinating talk during the Norwich week-end on Delian interpretation — such impressive audio-visual aids! — I was on the alert for the woodwind playing and its general balance with the orchestra. Generally, this came through well; the flute and oboe were particularly effective in the drooping theme which contributes to the early part of the final section. The brass was rather less satisfactory, both in balance and in intonation, though the trumpets in the final section bravely attacked the tramping tune, which Ronald Stevenson likened to Delius tramping on his Yorkshire moors.

The string playing was by turns lively and wistful and the conductor was, for the most part, able to bring out from the orchestra a good deal of that elusive pulse which is such a vital ingredient of Delius's music. At times, especially in some of the denser tutti passages, this

was lost, perhaps muddled by the rather turgid acoustics of the College Theatre, a low building with roof timbers.

Delius's music presents a stiff challenge to conductors and orchestras. Friends in the Mid-Sussex Sinfonia told me they had enjoyed playing Delius for the first time. I hope they can persuade their talented young conductor to undertake a second round—perhaps one of the shorter, but no less taxing, orchestral pieces? With such a creditable 'first', this will be something to look forward to.

## News from the Midlands

### LYNDON JENKINS ON DELIUS'S CONTEMPORARIES

The Midlands Branch commenced its 15th season of Delius Society meetings on 22nd September last at Dick Kitching's home in Sherwood, Nottingham, with a superb talk by Lyndon Jenkins entitled *The Music of Delius's Contemporaries*, which was a programme of English vocal, choral and instrumental music containing something for all tastes.

Opening with an excerpt from Elgar's Symphonic Phantasia *Polonia*, we moved to a Bridge work, *Rosemary*, one of Ivor Gurney's songs, *I will go with my Father a-ploughing*, and Arnold Bax's *Morning Song* played by Harriet Cohen. Sir George Dyson (who, we were told, wrote the War Office manual on grenade-fighting!) was represented by Isobel Baillie singing as the Wife of Bath from *The Canterbury Pilgrims*, and George Butterworth, described as perhaps the greatest loss to music of the First World War, by No.1 of *Two English Idylls* based on folk songs. Gerald Finzi's work was featured next as we heard part of *The Rapture* from his work *Dies Natalis* sung by Wilfred Brown, followed by a superbly tight and accurate rendering of Gustav Holst's Intermezzo from the first of two military band suites played by the Eastman Wind Ensemble, and Lyndon completed the first part of the programme by playing two versions of Elgar's *The Shower* part-song, sung by the Louis Halsey Singers and the Swingles II Singers.

After an excellent interlude of wine and a buffet supper Lyndon opened his shorter second half with Julian Lloyd Webber's performance of Delius's *Romance* for 'Cello and Piano, followed by two short songs from Vaughan Williams's song-cycle *On Wenlock Edge*, namely *From far, from Eve and Morning* and *Oh! when I was in Love with you*, together with a rather uncharacteristic *Gallop* for orchestra. E. J. Moeran featured next with a piece for orchestra, *Lonely Waters*, which sounded in parts very like *Autumn* from Delius's *North Country Sketches*, and of course, although not English, Percy Grainger found a place in the programme with his piece for double chorus and two pianos, *The Hunter in his Career*, a fast-moving and tuneful, tongue-in-cheek piece.

The final piece raised a few eyebrows as Lyndon announced the name of Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt Berners and quoted one of his verses called *Red Roses and Red Noses*, the sentiment of which was that red roses bloom only once but red noses could bloom all the year

through! Although he studied with Stravinsky, his musical offering in this instance was a bawdy music-hall song, *Come on Algernon*, rendered in very spirited fashion by Meriel Dickinson with her husband at the piano.

Altogether a very pleasant evening with Lyndon lifting the veil on some less well-known areas of English music which, as was said, while perhaps not being in themselves great masterpieces, were no less enjoyable for all that. Due to Dick Kitching moving house, this was the last meeting to be held at Wyvill Cottage, and Lyndon expressed the thanks of the whole company for the many happy times spent there.

#### DAWN REDWOOD ON "HASSAN"

The second meeting of the season took place at Jerry and Jennifer Rowe's house in Derby on Saturday 10th November, where, despite the efforts of British Rail to prevent them from coming, we met Christopher and Dawn Redwood. Seventeen members had assembled, anxious to hear Dawn's talk on *Flecker and Delius—the Making of 'Hassan'*. We knew this talk had been given to the London Branch; some of us had read her book, and the added attraction for the Midlands Branch was that we were to hear a test pressing of the new recording of the *Hassan* music by Vernon Handley with the Bournemouth Sinfonietta and Bournemouth Sinfonietta Chorus. Dawn devoted the first half of her talk to a resumé of her book, drawing the parallels between Delius's and Flecker's lives, their comparable backgrounds, their deaths from degenerative diseases and their pursuit of the twin themes of the transience of human life and the desire both to escape and transcend it. Although the choice of Delius to write the incidental music seems to have been fairly capricious it turned out to be an ideal one. Although they never met, Delius and Flecker were the perfect complement for one another. After refreshments 'Midlands Style', we gathered once again to hear the new record together with tapes of radio performances and the Percy Fletcher 78 records. The consensus of opinion was that the radio recording, which naturally included the spoken words, was more satisfactory than the music on its own. This only served to prove Delius's skill as the music both heightened and embellished the drama without being of sufficient individuality to distract attention from the spoken word. The new record is still a valuable addition as it is a complete score and contains the ballet music, which is now on a modern recording for the first time. There was more to come as Dawn was in possession of a remarkable collection of press cuttings and notices of the 1923 production of *Hassan*, lent to her by a descendant of Flecker. These were scrutinised by everybody. It was easy to understand why with so many famous names (like Fokine's) associated with the production and such exotic costumes and staging, *Hassan* became the 'hit' of the London Theatre scene for 1923.

P. V. TROTMAN



# Correspondence

SIR HAMILTON HARTY.

Dear Sir,

I was most interested to read Stephen Lloyd's tribute to Sir Hamilton Harty in your last issue, and particularly in the reviews which hinted that Harty's *Mass of Life* might have bettered even Beecham's. I, as a singer, say that Beecham has not been bettered in Delius—there has not been one to touch him, and it was he who brought Delius's works out of obscurity. About the time that I sang in *A Mass of Life* under Harty in Manchester and later in London I had so many engagements I was unable to gather in reviews of every concert. I have no notice in my scrapbooks to pinpoint anything out of the way regarding these concerts. I will, however, sum up the difference between the two conductors by speaking first of Berlioz.

I was one of Harty's 'pet' singers and I loved his Berlioz for its *fire*. I was Aeneas in his performance of *The Trojans at Carthage* on 2nd November 1928 in Manchester, of which Stephen Williams wrote:

"The singing of Mr. Francis Russell was, indeed, the torch, so to speak, that set the whole performance alight. When Sir Hamilton Harty stood away from his orchestra with that rueful, embarrassed, almost apologetic smile flecking and forming on his lips, the whole audience, orchestra and choir, shouted and cheered. Yes, cheers at the Hallé!! The Gods are not dead after all."

It was this *fire* that informed all Harty's Berlioz, something that Beecham could not reproduce. In Delius the situation between the two was quite reversed. Agnes Nicholls (Lady Harty) agreed with me that for Mozart, Haydn, Cherubini and Delius Beecham had an especial sensibility. I think that his early background undoubtedly contributed to this gift. Beecham, always unpredictable, even as to punctuality, with a flick of his hands would suddenly draw the very best out of all the orchestra and singers to create an uplifting and inspired performance. Harty did not obtain this in Delius. Regarding interpretation of works, both conductors rehearsed very thoroughly and here I cannot differentiate between the two.

Harty once said to me, "the critics always like to think they are teaching an artist his business"; and "remember, a river gains immensely in power if it is dammed here and there. The river is your voice."

Johannesburg.

Francis Russell.

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

February 20th at 7.30 p.m.

Delius Society meeting at Holborn Public Libraries, Theobalds Road, London WC1. John Bird talks on *Grainger and Delius*.

March 1st at 7.45 p.m.

At the Civic Hall, Borehamwood, Herts., the first performance of Eric Fenby's reduced orchestration of *A Mass of Life* given by Finchley Choral Society with Margot Archibald, Maureen Lehane, Edmund Bohan, Malcolm Singer, conducted by Alan Barlow.

Tickets £1.50, £1.75 and £2.

March 17th and 18th.

Jacksonville Music Festival: *Sea Drift* with John Shirley-Quirk.

March 25th at 7.00 p.m.

Delius Society meeting at the British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W.1. Stephen Lloyd presents a centenary tribute to Cyril Scott.

April 12th.

At Norwich, Julian Lloyd Webber plays the Delius 'Cello Concerto with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, with Beethoven's 7th Symphony.

April 24th at 7.00 p.m.

Delius Society meeting at the British Music Information Centre, 10 Stratford Place, London W1. 'Desert Island Delius'.

May 11th.

At the Two Street Tavern, Philadelphia, AGM of the Philadelphia branch.

May 12th at 8 p.m.

At Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts, *A Mass of Life* conducted by Michael Korn.

May 17th.

At the Fairfield Halls, Croydon, *A Mass of Life* performed by Croydon Philharmonic Society with Iris Bourne, Margaret Duckworth, Charles Corp and Tom McDonnell, conducted by James Gaddarn.

May 21st, 23rd, 29th and 31st at Leeds,

June 11th and 14th at Sunderland,

June 18th and 21st at Manchester.

English National Opera North presents *A Village Romeo and Juliet* with Joy Roberts (Vreli) and Stuart Harling (Dark Fiddler), conducted by David Lloyd-Jones.



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